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SUMMARY OF THE FRENCH PROGRAM OF RESEARCH ON THE STRATOSPHERIC OZONE LAYER

Research on the stratospheric ozone layer was intensified in France beginning in 1972 when a committee was created for the study of the consequences of stratospheric flights (COVOS).

The research conducted by COVOS concerned the spectometric measurement from balloons or airplanes, of minor nitrogen oxyde compounds (NO, NO_2, NO_3, H) in the stratosphere, the study of small-scale turbulence, the study of the biologic effects of ultra violet rays, the measurement of the nitrogen oxyde content of airplane engine exhausts and, lastly, models, particularly two-dimensional models. The results obtained do not indicate that any sizable reduction of the ozone layer can be expected from the use of planes of the Concorde type in the foreseeable future.

Additional research was started in 1976 under the DGRST, the CNSF, and the Weather Bureau. The main purpose of that research was to check the ozone layer to study the minor chloride and oxyde compounds in the atmosphere and in the laboratory, and the development of new methods of exploration of the atmosphere.

In general, France considers that the many unknown factors affecting knowledge of the stratosphere require a long-term research program which should be coordinated on the international level. Accordingly, France is delighted with the step taken by UNEP.